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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/735,067	12/11/2003	Katsuichi Minami	MAT-8493US	1264

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RATNERPRESTIA
P O BOX 980
VALLEY FORGE, PA 19482-0980

EXAMINER

WILLIAMS, MARK A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3676

DATE MAILED: 06/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/735,067

Applicant(s)

MINAMI ET AL.

Examiner

Mark A. Williams

Art Unit

3676

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/18/05.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kato et al., US Patent 6,175,990, in view of Hayashi, Han, or Jung (6,530,121, 6,085,387, 5,697,124), and in further view of Lin, US Patent 6,108,868. Kato provides an opening and closing device comprising a case 15a in substantially tubular shape including a first end face having a first through-hole in a center thereof, a stator 10 facing the first end face inside the case; a rotor 13 accommodated in the case and facing the stator, the rotor being rotatable with respect to the stator; a spring 14 for pushing the rotor to the stator. A cover 6 is provided, as claimed.

Kato provides the claimed invention except (1) the device being adapted to be coupled to a moveable part of a second device, and (2) lubrication means,

the lubrication means being a slide member, and the location of slide members, as claimed.

Regarding (1), each of Hayashi, Han, and Jung discloses the concept of a tubular case for attachment of a similar type hinge member as a single unit, as in the claimed manner. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made for one skilled in the art to have included in the design of Kato such a modification, for the purpose of attachment of the hinge device to a second device as a single unit.

Regarding (2), Lin teaches the concept of lubrication means of slide members 80, located in various parts of the hinge, for the purpose of providing a reduction to friction between abutting surfaces during rotation, thus providing desired ease of pivoting of the hinge. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made for one skilled in the art to have included in the design of Kato such lubrication means of slide members, oriented as claimed, and as generally taught by Lin, for the purpose of providing a reduction to friction during rotation, thus providing desired ease of pivoting of the hinge.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed 3/18/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that a lubricated member in Kato would prevent the invention from operating as intended. The examiner disagrees in that it is clear that relative rotation is intended to take place between the shaft portion 2 and stator 10 in Kato, and element 11 is to provide a bearing surfaces for that rotation. It is very well know in that art to provide means for lubricating such bearing surfaces; thus the use of a lubricating element, such that taught by Lin, is still believed to be an obvious modification. Further, the examiner also adds that Kato does not explicitly state that the "friction" element 11 is for providing resistance to rotation, so it could well be the case, when considering the material of construction as nylon, that this element is intended to provide a lubrication effect. But even if it were intended to provide a friction force, it has been well established in the art that combinations of lubrication elements and friction elements are common in a variety of types of hinge constructions.

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark A. Williams whose telephone number is (703) 305-3438. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mark Williams

5/26/05



Suzanne Dino Barrett
Primary Examiner